



State of Washington

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Mailing Address: 600 Capitol Way N - Olympia, Washington 98501-1091 - (360) 902-2200, TDD (360) 902-2207
Main Office location: Natural Resources Building - 1111 Washington Street SE - Olympia, WA

DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE (DNS)

Name of Proposal: CHERRY VALLEY DRAINAGE WORK TO PROVIDE FISH PASSAGE AND PREVENT POST FLOOD ENTRAPMENT OF FISHES AND MAINTAIN ACCESS

Description of Proposal:

This project is intended to address adverse floodwater impacts by improving capacity for drainage and facilitating fish passage out of this specific site.

This project will be performed in two phases. Phase 1 includes the correction of 22 identified water drainage constrictions which also function as fish passage barriers within a series of interconnected agricultural ditches at the Cherry Valley Wildlife Unit. These identified barriers, which impede water drainage and fish passage through the series of ditches and ponds, will be corrected by several methods. 1) Undersized and collapsed culverts will be replaced with larger culverts, vehicular bridges or pedestrian bridges. 2) Ditches blocked by sediment and debris will be cleaned to restore function. This includes one ditch blocked by an earthen dam which will be removed to restore ditch connection and function. One additional culvert will be removed and the location permanently filled because this site does not provide any drainage benefit. Phase 1 activities will result in a net cut of 3577.4 cubic yards of material from within existing ditches.

Phase 2 activities will include hydraulically connecting 7 isolated man-made ponds to the existing ditch system in Cherry Valley to facilitate drainage, especially during periods following high water events. These seven isolated ponds not only impound water but currently strand fish. Phase 2 activities (besides improving drainage) will also allow fish to escape this area and avoid warmer and drier periods that might prove lethal to juvenile salmonids. Ponds will be connected to the existing drainage system by excavating short ditches to connect a series of four adjacent ponds to the ditch, and also excavating short ditches to connect three single ponds to existing ditches. One culvert will be added in a newly created ditch to maintain tractor access to agricultural land. Phase 2 activities will result in a net cut of 1349.16 cubic yards of material from within the work area.

Phase 2 activities will involve hydraulically connecting 7 isolated man-made ponds to the existing ditch system in Cherry Valley to provide fish passage and facilitate drainage and out of the ponds following high water events. These seven isolated ponds not only impound water but strand fish (including juvenile salmonids) that enter these ponds during flooding events. Stranded fish are exposed to lethal temperatures, lethal dissolved oxygen levels, and predation. Phase 2 activities (besides improving drainage) will also allow fish to escape this area and avoid warmer and drier seasons.

Proponent/Applicant:

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Location of Proposal Cherry Valley Unit of WDFW Snoqualmie Wildlife Area:

Washington, King County; Section 7, Township 27 North, Range 7 East WM

Lead Agency: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

WDFW has determined that this proposal will likely not have a significant adverse impact on the environment. Therefore, state law¹ does not require an environmental impact statement (EIS). WDFW made this determination of nonsignificance (DNS) after we reviewed the environmental checklist and other information on file with us.

We issued this DNS according to state rules.² We will **not act on this proposal for 14 days** from the date we issued the DNS. Agencies, affected tribes, and members of the public are invited to comment on this proposal or DNS. We must receive your comments within 14 days of the date of this letter. This means we must receive your comments by **December 8, 2011**

Method of Comment:

The following procedures shall govern the method to comment on agency SEPA proposals. Comments received through these procedures are part of the official SEPA record for this proposal.

You can submit your comments any one of the following ways:

- Email to SEPAdesk2@dfw.wa.gov
- Online at the WDFW SEPA website comment link at: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/sepa/>
- Fax to (360) 902-2946;
- Mail to the address below.

Responsible Official: Bob Zeigler

Position/Title: SEPA/NEPA Coordinator, WDFW Regulatory Services Section

Address: 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, WA 98501-1091

After the comment period closes, applicants may view the updated status of this proposal on the WDFW SEPA website: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/sepa/> Once the status is posted as final, applicants and permittees may take action on the proposal. When a proposal is modified or withdrawn, notice will be given in accordance with state law.¹

If you have questions about this DNS or the details of the proposal, contact Bob Zeigler at the address, e-mail, or fax number above; you can also call him at (360) 902-2578.

DATE OF ISSUE: November 22, 2011

SIGNATURE:

**Footnotes**

1. RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c)
2. WAC 197-11-340(2).

